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SCOTT C. BONE, Editor.

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Precocious Youth in the Navy.

A newspaper dispatch from Newport, R. I., conveys the information that the young navy officers who are in attendance at the conference over battle-ship construction at the Naval War College "are pushing themselves to the front." Nothing has been vouchsafed from the secret chamber where this confab of experts is being conducted, and apparently nothing is to come from that mysterious quarter. It has been reported, however, that every officer under the order of the President possesses one vote, which is equal to any other vote, whether it is cast by an old, experienced officer or a new and untitled one. In the conference a vote is a vote, even to the army officer who happens to be attending the course at the Naval War College and who finds himself embarrassed with the privilege, if not the requirement, of exercising his franchise regarding the height of the armor belt, the type of ammunition hoist, and the other profound questions which have precipitated the naval personnel into a turmoil and converted naval discussion into a wrangle.

It is imaginable that the secret conference at Newport is no better than any other session of experts who entertain theories and who now have the opportunity of ventilating their pet projects. This may be no cause for comment, but there is invitation of remark when it is announced in this same dispatch from Newport "from an official source" that "the older officers have found themselves against a stiff proposition, for the opinions of the younger men have been found to be valuable and worthy of the greatest respect."

That is an injustice to those members of the navy personnel who are laboring for unity of action and harmony of opinion. No one outside of the service has imagined for a moment that the young men were regarded as unworthy of respect or that their views were treated with disdain. Such an announcement "from an official source" must mean that there is a controversy, as well as a conference, at the Naval War College, and that some one is very anxious to give the impression that it is a contest between the elders and the juniors, with an unexpected victory for the younger men. An announcement of this sort is unfortunate, mainly for the erroneous impression it is bound to give to people outside the service who may not understand that much of the scrimmage which has been going on has been confined to a few officers who have made the most of their influential positions to attack their associates and create a sensation as a part of the campaign of discredit. Whatever comes of the conference at Newport, it will be well for the sources of information at that place, if there exist any, to abstain from contributing to the public impression that the navy is hopelessly and permanently torn with petty jealousy and dissension.

Our English boustins are game fighters, but not many of them are good losers, for all that.

Union in South Africa.

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform"—so runs the opening line of an old hymn, whose verity is constantly being impressed upon those who watch the progress of the world.

A few years ago, when the chaos of the Boer war seemed to threaten the destruction of all that had been accomplished for striving civilization in the most fruitful parts of South Africa, it seemed that even if England went a struggle which at that time seemed nearly hopeless, that best she could hope for was that she would have under her control a country which, like Ireland, had always the spirit of independence in its heart, whose people would constantly be in a state of revolt. And yet we find within a few short years after the close of the Boer war a movement toward the formation of a South African federation. Something of this sort was the dream of Paul Kruger. Perhaps the time was not ripe for it during his life—conditions made it impossible—but now the ambition of modern South Africa has come to be Paul Kruger's ambition, and the strife to-day is toward his ideal. And it is to be noted,

too, that the movement for a federation in South Africa comes, not alone from the people in South Africa, but is heartily supported and backed by the imperial government of Great Britain.

The result is that there is to be held before long an intercolonial convention at Durban to formulate a plan of union and to draft a convention which shall hereafter control the governments of the intercolonial union. The delegates to this intercolonial convention are to be appointed by the four governments. Of course, the Boer interests will predominate, as the Boer population far exceeds that of any one nation in South Africa.

The great question that is to be settled by the intercolonial conference in South Africa is the question as to what form the union shall take, whether it shall be a federation obliterating the existing colonial boundaries, or shall be a federation similar to that of Canada and Australia. It is interesting to note, also, that both British and Boer are to be found as advocates of both plans. The majority seems to be in favor of federation and the retention of existing colonial lines—a form of federation that will be more in keeping with the precedent of their British colonies.

The most interesting phase of the whole subject is that in the short years that have elapsed since the Boer war these diverse interests and old-time enmities should apparently have faded all away and left the possibility of such a union which will make for the peace and prosperity of the African colonies.

Richard Croker says King Edward is the most popular man in the world. Mr. Croker hasn't visited us on this side during the past six years, however.

A Sleep Wooser.

Says the Kansas City Journal:
"Chloral, morphia, and the poppy must look to their laurels as aids to 'nature's sweet restorer,' for a recent invention promises to banish insomnia. The invention is a musical bed. The sleeper and tired man goes to bed, and with his foot, releases a spring which sets a musical box in motion. The apparatus begins to grind out lullabies and melodies, and in a short time the patient is sleeping peacefully."

Now, here is something worth while—an invention that may truly be classed important. If true. We are not swamped in admiration of the festive phonograph, and we have, mayhap, handed it a few lemons on occasions. But if it is able to make good along the lines indicated in the item above, we are quite prepared to retract much that we have said, and to admit it to a higher rating among the useful things of this world.

Since artificial aids to sleep were first thought out, music has never been excelled as a satisfactory agent. The lullaby a mother sings to her babe is the sweetest music that human beings ever hear in this world, we believe. No Emma Laertes, no Geraldine Farrar, no Emma Nevada has ever fashioned notes to equal its melody in the ears of the intended audience. Unfortunately, from some standpoints, at least, we cannot always be little children, and so we come, in time, to understand a quality of music more superb, more technical, more finely modulated to progressing intelligence, even though it is not half so appealing, really.

We believe this so-called "musical bed" may fill a long-felt want—all it, at least, as nearly as it can be done. We do not know but that the old songs are the ones best fitted for its usefulness. How would you like to be lulled to sleep to-night, say, with the strains of "Rock-a-bye, Baby, in the Tree Top," or "Go Tell Aunt Abigail"? Perhaps, down in your heart, you would like it first-rate, but you wouldn't care to admit it—not right out in meeting, anyhow. That is where this musical bed would come in! You might retire with it to the quiet of your own room, put on the soft pedal, and enjoy a rare old nooze all by your lone some—and suffer not the slightest embarrassment in the meantime!

It seems to us that the "musical bed" is likely to prove a most popular affair when put on the market. It suggests a field of activity that might be explored with great benefit to mankind—a field wherein may be much happiness!

Russia's Navy.

It is hard to sympathize with the overwhelming ambition of Russia, which in spite of the disastrous experiences in the Japanese-Russian war, still insists on appropriating large sums of money, hard-won from the poor peasantry, for the purposes of building another navy. Of all the countries of the world, it would seem that Russia is least in need of an armed force on the sea. Her territories are so gigantic, and, as Napoleon's disaster at Moscow showed, so inaccessible, that she is in no danger of invasion by the powers of the world. She has not the seacoast that makes a navy an imperative part of the defenses of other nations; her men have not the training necessary to make sailors.

She had a great fleet, great as far as money can make a fleet, but because she had not the men to man it, nor the right spirit with which to imbue it, that fleet lay at the bottom of the sea, and the men who manned it are dead or disgraced.

What possible hope has Russia of creating a navy out of mere money? It has only been four years ago since her fleet sailed under the command of Rojdestvensky to battle in far East, to maintain Russia's honor and prestige. The ships were not good; the powder was faulty, and when it came to officers, Russia had to take cavalry officers from her army and put them on the ships, and, of course, they were absolutely ignorant, however brave they may have been. Mutiny broke out, and still urged on by a strange patriotism that even in autocratic Russia is a dominant passion, went to Ingolstadt.

Within herself, Russia has enormous powers of recuperation. She has glorious opportunities—magnificent wealth lies within her borders. It seems a strange misuse of energy that she, who has so much to gain by devoting herself to the arts of peace, to devising better forms of

government for her subjects, and to encouraging the growth of industrial enterprises, should waste her powers and her wealth in building a navy that can never hope to compete with those already in existence.

A Montgomery girl wants to know, through the Advertiser of that city, why a man always hugs around the waist, while a woman always hugs around the neck. How does the sweet thing know that is the invariable rule?

"Has the warm season reached its greatest intensity?" inquires the New York Herald, evidently bent on asking "Is it hot enough for you?" in some sort of fashion.

The Standard Oil's escape from a payment of that \$23,200.00 fine has started the I-told-you-so brigade to talking again.

Pity the American's Cup isn't a stein, since Emperor Bill Hohenzollern is thinking of having a run for it.

A Pennsylvania congregation is split in twain over the question of a new bath tub for the parson. In the meantime, the parson, we suppose, is in something of a sweat himself.

Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis' attitude is believed to have been somewhat lowered here of late.

A Georgia legislator wants to make it a misdemeanor for a woman to flirt. Oh, these summer girls!

The Fishing Gazette says "a fisherman can tell the truth as well as any man." Sure, he can; and he can tell an untruth even better than the average nonfisherman.

"Jeff" Davis is editing a newspaper in Florida. No, indeed; not the Senator. He is said to be awfully busy these days keeping his fences in order.

Mr. Wren's statement that he knows how to live to the age of 300 has created a good deal of surprise. If some of the chorine girls one sees these days should say the same thing, very few people would be inclined to doubt them in the least.

No doubt the African varnishes wish Mr. Roosevelt hadn't been so hard-headed about that third-term business.

"The President has directed the Attorney General to immediately take steps," says Mr. Loeb. We thought Mr. Loeb would file application for membership in the Initiative Splitters' Union eventually.

Judge Grosscup intimates that Presidential "sneezes," as he calls it, doesn't worry him. "Things are liable to commence happening to his honor, if he isn't very careful."

An Alabama man was five weeks recovering from a rattlesnake bite. Alabama folks do not get a chance to be cured of snake-bite often these "dry" times, you know, and that may account for this tardy convalescence.

"Moonshine makes the complexion yellow," says a contemporary. Still, we never notice that folks living in prohibition towns were any yellower than folks living in other towns.

Mr. Taft is credited with a desire to break the "Solid South." No doubt; Mr. Bryan, probably, would like to carry Pennsylvania, too.

A scientist says the world's water supply is drying up. Wouldn't it be nice if the people who bore us with their political mind-wanderings would follow suit this year?

The campaign is warming up. He is invariably referred to as "William Jennings Bryan" in the newspapers nowadays.

Wait until the musical comedies get a whack at us. Then you will have ample opportunity to see what a "sheath gown" looks like.

"Eleven geese were arrested in Pottstown, Pa., recently—two-legged geese," says a contemporary. Two-legged? Really?

WISCONSIN DEFECTION.

The State May Be Regarded as Doubtful.

From the Providence Journal.
Wisconsin is regarded by some Democrats as a doubtful State because of the large number of La Follette Republicans there who are dissatisfied with the comparatively conservative character of the Chicago platform. But former Gov. Scofield, who was twice elected to the chief office of the State on the Republican ticket, is restive on another account. He says: "If Taft is to follow out the policies of Roosevelt, I am going to vote for Bryan." In other words, Mr. Scofield is hostile to the Roosevelt brand of radicalism.

Count Zeppelin's flight in his wonderful dirigible, which has caused the greatest attention in Europe and elsewhere, has not been without its effect. Who can tell in how short a time the first battle will be fought in the air with Roosevelt's "Dark Continent" to hunt big game—well, or, that is, you know, just a bit sudden.

The Injunction Issue.

From the Indianapolis Star.

One of the principal planks in both national platforms relates to injunction. Some have claimed that to say anything against the use of the injunction would be a reflection upon the judiciary, but we cannot see it in that light. It will be a bad way for the republic to put the bench above the executive and the legislative departments. We believe in keeping them all distinct.

Comforts of Home.

From the Kansas City Times.

It will be noticed that Mr. Loeb, the President's private secretary, lends just a touch of emphasis to his denial of the story that he proposed to go with the President to Africa. This does not implicate, necessarily, that Mr. Loeb desires to live forever in the republic, but it does show the "Dark Continent" to hunt big game—well, or, that is, you know, just a bit sudden.

Gomper's Political Trades.

From the New York Tribune.

President Lewis' warning to Samuel Gomper not to attempt to influence the politics of the United Mine Workers is an open resentment of Gomper's methods by one of the strongest labor unions in the federation. Most unionists, however, will not think it worth while openly to rebuke the national leader, but will, more probably, treat his attempt to dictate their policies to them with silent contempt. The intelligent laboring men of the country are not a flock of sheep.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

A FINE REPEAST.

Cake and pickle.
Side by side.
By the ride.
Ham and custard.
In a bunch.
Thus the mixture—
Picnic lunch.

But when eaten
Neath the trees,
Whimpering on
And a breeze,
In contentment
We can munch
Our delicious
Picnic lunch.

Learning the Dix.

"Ferdie is a fine type of young American."

"As to how?"

"Determined to begin at the bottom, he has put his valet to work in his father's shop."

He Explains.

"John," said the candidate's wife, "you promised me to quit chewing tobacco for a while."

"So I did."

"Then, what are those stains around your mouth?"

"That's molasses, dear. I've been kissing babies."

An Early Crop.

"Great excitement in market centers."

"What about?"

"I understand the first bale of fall poetry has arrived."

Harmony.

Those ancient rivals,
The pen and the sword,
Now work together as
Nail and wire.

Each to His Trade.

"Pa, what's a minor arpeggio. This is an age literary speculation. We have minor trippers, and minor authors, and many others."

His Contention.

"What kind of poetry do you prefer?"

"Poetical," answered the Old Grouch.

"It ain't so all-fired common as some might think."

A Practical Argument.

"You speak of education?"

"Yes; what does it amount to? I can hire all the educated men I want at \$20 per week."

"Well, I can hire uneducated men at a dollar a day. That's giving education three to one the best of it, other considerations aside."

WHITE HOUSE INFLUENCE.

Exerted Wisely on Our Social Standards.

From the Detroit Free Press.

"There are no lovers like wedded lovers," wrote President Roosevelt in a note to his friend, Miss Kohlman, of Chicago, congratulating her on her approaching marriage. The phrase is reminiscent of President Cleveland's eulogy of wedded life as "one grand, sweet song."

In these times of divorces and loose views on marriage the attitude of occupants of the White House is, no doubt, a steady influence. It seems likely to continue, for Mrs. Taft's recent utterances on divorce are an assurance that her husband is as sound on the sanctity of marriage as he is upon all public questions, and Mr. Bryan's home life is a model for his fellow-citizens.

Pulpit pronouncements on the divorce evil, editorial comment, and formal addresses by men and women of prominence may have some effect in restraining the drift from old standards, but the most powerful can be little more than formal and conventional. The happiness that comes with such unions, and its reflection in the lives and social remarks of the happy couple, are of conspicuous station, inevitably carry more weight and influence for good than a thousand dry speeches.

FLEETS IN THE AIR.

Time Has Arrived for the Navies to Change.

From the Philadelphia Press.

It was only two years after Trafalgar was fought that Fulton sailed up the Hudson in his steamboat. In a very short time men of war that were propelled by sails were put out of commission by the steamers.

About midway between Fulton's day and our own two ironclads met in battle in Hampton Roads, and the death knell of all wooden warships was sounded at that hour. One little iron-sheathed monitor could sink all of Nelson's fleet.

Since the first Monitor and the Merrimack had their memorable fight there has been such a rapid advance in the way of armor, and guns that one Dreadnought today could whip a dozen first-class battle ships of a decade ago. But the only thing revolutionary in the last quarter of a century has been mainly in the way of bigness of ship and caliber of gun.

Has the time now arrived when another new invention is to annihilate existing navies? Count Zeppelin's flight in his wonderful dirigible, which has caused the greatest attention in Europe and elsewhere, has not been without its effect. Who can tell in how short a time the first battle will be fought in the air with Roosevelt's "Dark Continent" to hunt big game—well, or, that is, you know, just a bit sudden.

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A POET'S CREED.

"Assuage the tempests in the hearts that beat,
Upon the people as a gift to bring,
Transmute thy gold into the common dream,
Oh, all who seek and slumber, here the cross,
Villain and byron heard the selfsame thing,
Yet had they needed and had ceased to sing,
Were the earth the poorer for their loss!"

Stand back in silence, as with trembling awe,
Upon the people as a gift to bring,
Transmute thy gold into the common dream,
Oh, all who seek and slumber, here the cross,
Villain and byron heard the selfsame thing,
Yet had they needed and had ceased to sing,
Were the earth the poorer for their loss!"

—George Byron's Creed.

POLITICAL COMMENT.

Mr. Taft's speech of acceptance still continues the prevailing topic of political discussion, and the general impression one gets is that at the speech the speech has served to make Mr. Taft, the man, better known, and perhaps better understood by the people. On the whole, it may be said that the speech is favorably regarded. The Pro-backbone says:

"Throughout the speech there is a wholesome spirit of self-restraint that differentiates it from most of Mr. Roosevelt's recent addresses. There is no excited talk about corporate malfeasances, offenders of great wealth, plutocratic desperadoes, or the like; yet there is no want of force or conviction, no deficiency of courage or purpose. Mr. Taft, as has been said so many times, has the judicial temperament. He looks at all sides of a question, as it is a judge's business to do; but he is far more than a judge. Since his assumption of the chief portfolio of the executive, his executive capacity and the ability to organize and forward great enterprises. He is a constructive statesman; not a theorist, as Mr. Bryan is. It is difficult to believe that the country will hesitate in choosing between them."

The Charleston News and Courier is an adverse critic of the speech, though the length of it is one of its chief complaints. It says:

"Mr. Taft's speech of acceptance, like the platform upon which he stands, is a speech of 'statistical inventions and political evasions.' It is immediately long and was evidently prepared as a sort of political dragnet for the purposes of the present campaign and election. The bad trusts will not be frightened by it, and the good trusts will not be attracted by it. The measure of the Taft campaign fund, the only people, apparently, who cannot exact some sort of comfort or doubt from it are the white people of the South. Evidently, Mr. Taft's speech is not a campaign in the negro vote."

The Boston Journal terms the speech the "Cincinnati platform," and declares that it is broader than the one adopted in Chicago. It declares:

"Mr. Taft's speech may be called the Cincinnati platform. The Chicago platform is broader than any previous Republican platform, but it is not quite broad enough for the candidate. On the Cincinnati platform he must feel considerably safer. This platform speaks for honest, tariff-reform, and for the negro, for a solution of the railroad rate problem on the ground of service and mutual interest, as well as the proposed physical valuation, for a square deal for Philippine industries, and for proper limitation of Asiatic immigration. Mr. Taft's advocacy of a campaign publicity law is in accord with the principles of the platform, and his approval of the idea of the popular election of United States Senators will be generally welcomed. Though, as he says, this is not a party question, it is a campaign platform in trend, but not in tone. What it seems to promise is progress without the big stick."

The St. Louis Republic is another journal which finds much to criticize in Mr. Taft's speech, and declares it to be a good Democratic document. It says:

"Facing the tariff issue, Mr. Taft bows to the edict of 'standpatism,' which even Roosevelt himself has repudiated. The tariff reformer, disappears in Taft, the candidate, obedient to the party mandate and willing to defend even the prohibitory duty that projects a trust. The measure of the tariff reformer is expected under his administration would obviously be that meted out by the tariff barons themselves.

It carries the message for the lesson it carries between the lines, the Taft speech is a Democratic document. In very large part it is an ingenious effort to prove that the Republican platform is what the Democratic platform says. The American people must decide whether they want that party to rule which says what it means or will trust the welfare of the country to a party which dared not say what it pretends to mean."

The Buffalo Times thinks the speech has little or no educational value and that the people will not indorse it. It declares:

"In a speech of 12,000 words Judge Taft has not contributed a sentence to the education of the people in political matters. There is no new idea, no new strength in his speech. From beginning to end it is a plain attempt to keep on both sides of the great issues which are to be fought in the campaign. The English public has been greatly surprised by this report, and its capacity for astonishment is proof that England has had no experience worth mentioning with stomachic bitters. Our government, on the other hand, as a result of invention some years ago, found that gin by another name was drunk in quantities that defrauded the internal revenue."

INTEMPERATE TEMPERANCE.

English Soft Drinks Contain Too Much Alcohol.

From the Boston Transcript.

A board of experts has recently made its report to the British government on the intemperate character of temperance drinks sold in the United Kingdom. It finds that many of the most popular beverages coming under this category contain all the way from 2 to 12 per cent of alcohol. The British taxation laws take no cognizance of beverages containing less than 2 per cent of alcohol, and three-quarters of the samples of temperance drinks examined by the board far exceeded that proportion. Some apparently innocent herb beers were found to contain as much alcohol as claret or Rhine wine. The English public has been greatly surprised by this report, and its capacity for astonishment is proof that England has had no experience worth mentioning with stomachic bitters. Our government, on the other hand, as a result of invention some years ago, found that gin by another name was drunk in quantities that defrauded the internal revenue."

A Nantucket Tablet.

From the Springfield Union.

To Nantucket's already numerous and interesting memorials is added a bronze tablet bearing the names of the Nantucket men who fought on the Bon Homme Richard with John Paul Jones, which has just been unveiled in the old Quaker meetinghouse. The tablet memorializes twenty-two Nantucket men who shipped with Jones, and was unveiled by the only lineal descendant of these men now living—Miss Jennie Chase, a granddaughter of the noted "Long Tom Coffin," whose right name was Reuben Chase. Few towns have preserved so fully the spirit and memories of the past, and the historic meetinghouse will no doubt be cherished for generations to come.

Not Enthusiastic.

From the Mason Telegraph.

The Telegraph will vote for the electors put in the field recently by the Democratic State convention. The editor of the Telegraph was a member and an officer of that convention. If these electors are chosen, and we hope they will, they will cast their votes for Bryan.

While it is lamentably true that all three of the platform and political parties are honeycombed with socialism there is nothing left for us to do but to follow what is left of Democracy—a name!

Chicago's Greentness.

From the Chicago Inter-Ocean.

Chicago is the center and metropolis of the region where Presidents are made. The East contributes campaign funds and votes—sometimes, and always in Pennsylvania—to the making of Republican Presidents. The West contributes enthusiasm and noise. But the Middle West—the Mississippi Valley—does the hard and sober thinking that moves the nation to action and makes Presidents.

Even Things Up.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Once more a learned judge has decided that the woman who goes through her husband's pockets is not guilty of any offense known to the law. On the other hand, a Western judge has enjoined a woman from talking over the back fence. This would seem to even things up.

Lambs for the Shearers.

From the Brooklyn Times.

Having brought a few lambs into the market by their recent killing of stocks,